



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Historical Park  
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## Jean Lafitte *News Release*

September 13, 2006  
For Immediate Release

### **Fact Sheet:        Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery Damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita**

Chalmette Battlefield, site of the Battle of New Orleans in 1815, is one of six sites of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve. Due to damage from hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the battlefield and adjoining national cemetery have been closed except for special programs. All site offices are currently relocated to park headquarters at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve at 419 Decatur Street, New Orleans, 504-589-3882.

On September 17, 2006, the battlefield grounds and public restrooms re-opened to the public. The temporary battlefield visitor center is still under construction but is expected to open in late fall. Chalmette National Cemetery is accessible by walking in through the cemetery's main gate at any time or driving from the battlefield tour road when the battlefield grounds are open.

The historic Malus-Beauregard House and Chalmette Monument remain closed; repairs are expected to start by the end of the year. Although flooded by water from Hurricane Katrina, the house received minor damage and is closed for roof and structural repairs scheduled prior to the hurricane. The monument's stone façade has been repointed but interior staircase handrails remain unsafe for visitor use.

After the storms, National Guard Troops and the United States Marine Corps provided security to the site after the storms and assisted in debris clean-up. National Park Service crews from throughout the southeast region assisted in pruning damaged trees and restoration experts evaluated buildings and saved artifacts. Firefighters from the Thibodaux, Louisiana, Volunteer Fire Department assisted in ventilating buildings and removing damaged contents.

Group programs at the battlefield are available on a limited basis and by reservation only. Call 504-589-2636 ext. 1 for more information.

## CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD

- Visitor Center - flooded to rafters. Condemned and demolished. Temporary visitor center in place; final work being completed.
- Chalmette Monument - prior to storms was being cleaned and re-pointed. Scaffolding torn loose by high winds and caused some damage to monument cap and steps. Scaffolding was re-erected in spring 2006 and cleaning and re-pointing completed in June. Interior staircase handrails remain unsafe.
- Malus-Beauregard House – the historic (built about 1836) house was flooded three feet deep. Slate roof and dormers severely damaged. Structural integrity sound. Repairs, including many scheduled before hurricanes, should begin by end of 2006. Interior cleaned and restored by National Park Service experts.
- Other structures and roads – restrooms flooded but building in good condition; reopened September 17, 2006. Sewer and water system lift stations destroyed but repaired. Roads, rampart, and battlefield flooded but grounds recovering. Footbridge over Rodriguez Canal washed away by floodwaters.

## CHALMETTE NATIONAL CEMETERY

- Headstones – no significant damage received.
- Trees – seven historic sycamore and live oak trees were uprooted and had to be removed. An additional 40 trees died or were severely damaged by high winds and had to be removed.
- Cemetery wall – 2500 feet of historic brick wall destroyed.
- Other structures - Old superintendent's lodge/current offices (built about 1929) flooded to second story; contents have been removed. Carriage house/maintenance building (1929) flooded to rafters; all equipment destroyed; contents have been removed. Maintenance equipment shed flooded; all mowers, tractors, electric carts, etc. destroyed.

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